

Additionally, AFATDS will be a major component in the Army battle command system (ABCS). The other components of ABCS are the maneuver control system (MCS), forward area air defense command and control (FAADC<sup>2</sup>), combat service support control system (CSSCS) and all-source analysis system (ASAS).

AFATDS supports the five fire support functional areas: planning, execution, movement control, FA mission support and FA fire direction operations. Its software operates on common hardware that consists of the tactical computer unit that has a removable magnetic disk cartridge with a two-gigabyte memory capability and 125 megahertz of speed. Additionally, there is a 650-megabyte optical disk drive, a 1.44-megabyte 3.5-inch disk drive and a 600-megabyte CD-ROM drive.

AFATDS software will be used at various levels throughout the battlefield, from fire direction centers (FDCs)

to fire support elements (FSEs) to command posts (CPs). AFATDS provides distributed processing and ensures commonality and interoperability.

The LCU will continue to be used at various levels. The most notable of these is the introduction of the LCU to the company-level FIST. In this case the LCU will have a new color monitor, a 90-megahertz Pentium processor, 128-megabyte RAM and a one-gigabyte removable hard drive.

AFATDS is being fielded with the hand-held terminal unit (HTU) to be used by FOs and dismounted FISTs (replacing the FED) and also by commanders, fire support officers, scouts and reconnaissance elements. The HTU is lightweight (three and one-half pounds) and is about half the size of the FED.

**Roll Up Your Sleeves.** These tactical data systems will change the way we accomplish our mission. The Field Artillery of the 21st century will present new challenges.

Old systems are being replaced by high-tech, innovative tactical data systems that will require new training and present wartime challenges to all leaders, especially FA NCOs. Redleg NCOs need to roll up their sleeves and dive head first into all of the new equipment and technology being developed and fielded today and in the years to come. Only then will we be fully prepared to utilize these new systems, accomplish our mission and train our soldiers to fight and win on the battlefield of the future.

I would remind my fellow Field Artillery NCOs of the last sentence in the Creed: "I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!"

SFC W. Lee Ebbs, FA  
HHB, 2-3 FA, 1st AD  
Operation Joint Endeavor  
Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1996

## Through the Eyes of a 1SG: Battery (Light) Defense

A light battery in a defensive position needs the eyes of the first sergeant (1SG). He gathers up doctrine and graphical depictions of what a static battery position should look like and evaluates his unit's defense. He goes through his battery's tactical operational procedure handbook to ensure his unit meets all the parameters. He constantly asks himself, "Are we prepared?"

The good 1SG looks around the battery and notices when soldiers are sleeping during beginning morning nautical twilight (BMNT) or crew-served weapons are unmanned and corrects the situations. Furthermore, he checks listening post/observation post (LP/OP) guards to see if they're sleeping.

And when he finds too many problems, he asks the age-old question, "Are these discipline or training problems?" All battery soldiers must be thoroughly trained in essential basic soldiering skills (11B). Defensive skills through the eyes of a 1SG go beyond just his tactically evacuating casualties and logistical support (minus Class V considerations). He first ensures his soldiers have the basic skills, those skills that prepare them for wartime requirements. First sergeants should ask, "When is the last time my soldiers threw a live hand grenade, fired

the AT-4, detonated a claymore mine and, most of all, qualified with their individual and crew-served weapons?" These skills should be at the top of every 1SG's priority list.

*FM 6-50 Tactics, Techniques and Procedures for the Field Artillery Cannon Battery* gives no guidance useful to a 1SG in those field crafts necessary for the battery's survival. Camouflage, reaction force techniques, placing crew-served weapons and active patrolling are just a few examples. They are left up to the 1SG.

Camouflage goes beyond placing nets over howitzers to hide them from enemy forces. Camouflage starts at the individual soldier with his proper use of face camouflage and his uniform.

The battery's reaction force must know those basic maneuvering skills required to close with an enemy, as outlined in *FM 7-8 The Infantry Rifle Platoon and Squad* and the *Ranger Handbook SH 21-76*. The 1SG must see that Redlegs routinely emplace crew-served weapons so they support the overall battery defense. He must see that survivability positions are constructed and concertina wire, mine fields or other obstacles are emplaced for his battery to survive.

One defense weakness in many artillery batteries is a lack of training on active

patrolling. If we reviewed lessons learned at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana, we'd probably find most artillery units are infiltrated by not having an active defense. A Pre-Ranger Course should be required for section chiefs and above in light artillery units to gain some of these skills.

Survival starts with every soldier's contributing to the overall battery defense. In war, soldiers may find themselves performing a number of duties, as necessary. That's why the 1SG cross-trains his Redlegs as if their lives depend on it—because they do.

The eyes of a 1SG are very important for the commander, who's involved in many events. The 1SG must take the time to ensure battery procedures are rehearsed to standards and soldiers know the basics—taking nothing for granted.

FA units make delivering timely, accurate rounds down range their priority—and rightfully so. But it's up to 1SGs to ensure batteries survive to put those rounds down range. If as a 1SG of a battery in a defensive position, you have done all the things listed here, then at night you can close your eyes and rest comfortably, knowing your unit is secure.

CSM Edward Judie, Jr.,  
10th Mtn Div (Lt IN) Arty  
Former 1SG, C/3-6 FA, 10th Div Arty  
Fort Drum, NY